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Message from the Editor

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Message from the Editor

Shannon E. French

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Every human endeavor has ethical dimensions, and leaders across all sectors must bear the weight of ethical responsibility. Leaders can improve or corrupt the character of their followers by guiding them to serve the best interests of humankind or influencing them to cause real and lasting harm. It is important to expose unprincipled leaders, identify their specific vices, and analyze the flaws in their moral reasoning.

It is equally important to hold up examples of leadership excellence to highlight the virtues and universal imperatives that direct the actions of ethical leaders. As General George S. Patton advised, “Watch what people are cynical about, and one can often discover what they lack.” The fact that many people take a jaded view of their leaders betrays a hunger for genuine ethical leadership.

Case Western Reserve University is proud to be the home of the Inamori International Center for Ethics and Excellence, which was founded in 2006 through a generous gift by Dr. Kazuo Inamori and the Inamori Foundation of Kyoto, Japan. The mission of the Inamori Center is to foster ethical leadership on our campus, in our local community, nationally, and worldwide. The Center is dedicated to exploring ethical issues from a global perspective, to nurturing awareness and understanding of our common humanity through the study, teaching, and practice of ethics, and to creating internationally recognized programs and initiatives devoted to ethical inquiry in both practical and theoretical aspects. Our goal is to facilitate the development of leaders who will, in the words of Dr. Inamori, “serve humankind through ethical deeds rather than actions based on self-interest and selfish desires.”

Each year, the Inamori Center and Case Western Reserve University present the Inamori Ethics Prize, which recognizes an individual who has demonstrated exemplary ethical leadership on the global stage by trying to improve the condition of humankind. This year marks the fifth year of the Inamori Ethics Prize. Examining the struggles and accomplishments of the

recipients of the prize is one way the Inamori Center encourages dialogue about the true nature of ethical leadership.

These are the first five recipients of the Inamori Ethics Prize:

Dr. Francis Collins, leader of the Human Genome Project and current Director of the United States National Institutes of Health (2008)

The Honorable Mary Robinson, former (and first female) President of Ireland, former U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, and founder of the Mary Robinson Foundation for Climate Justice (2009)

Mr. Stan Brock, conservationist and founder of the health care nonprofit Remote Area Medical (2010)

Advocate Beatrice Mtetwa, Zimbabwean human rights lawyer and defender of social justice (2011)

Dr. David Suzuki, Canadian environmentalist, author, award-winning broadcaster and documentarian (2012)

The *International Journal of Ethical Leadership* is another natural outgrowth of the Inamori Center's commitment to promoting an interdisciplinary, international exchange of ideas on the theory and practice of ethical leadership. We want to host a trusted forum for readers to explore historical, current, and emerging issues in global ethics and leadership. Our intention is not to endorse particular views, but to put a diversity of perspectives before our readers for their consideration.

We are immensely grateful to the talented and insightful authors for their contributions to this inaugural issue and for their thoughtful engagement with a wide range of vital topics, including human rights, world peace, climate justice, sustainability, health care ethics, corporate ethics, bioethics, and personal moral accountability. We also are pleased to include in this issue essays or transcribed speeches from the first five distinguished recipients of the Inamori Ethics Prize, as well as their biographies.

We hope that the contents of this journal will challenge and inspire our readers. Our aim is to stimulate meaningful conversation and reflection on the most pressing issues of our time. By emulating and perhaps even improving upon the performance of outstanding leaders, we can aspire to meet our ethical obligations to one another and to the future.